The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

Vol. XLVIII SEPTEMBER, 1939 No. 3

MY CREED

Let me be a little kinder, let me be a little blinder
To the faults of those about me, let me praise a little more.
Let me be, when I am weary, just a little bit more cheery,
Let me serve a little better those that I am striving for.
Let me be a little braver when temptation bids me waver,
Let me strive a little harder to be all that I should be.
Let me be a little meeker with the brother that is weaker,
Let me think more of my neighbor and a little less of me.

—*Selected.*

THE WAY OF LOVE

SOMEONE has said that while Christian knowledge is essential, love is preeminent. To us it seems that the reason knowledge is essential to the Christian is because, when it is properly used, it leads to love. Indeed, a knowledge, even of the deep things of God's Word, that does not lead to love, is of very little value except as it may afford temporarily a measure of self-satisfaction to the one who possesses it. Actually there is no relative value between the importance of knowledge and love in the Christian life. True Christian knowledge, obtainable from the Word of God, inevitably leads to love when it is received into good and honest hearts; and true Christian love, on the other hand, is based upon and is the outgrowth of true Christian knowledge.

It is possible to obtain what might be properly called a "head knowledge" of many of the details of God's plan as they are set forth in the Bible, without imbibing the spirit of love which that knowledge is intended to inspire in one's life. It is this kind of knowledge that the apostle evidently refers to when he says, "Though I have . . . all knowledge . . . and have not love, I am nothing." (1 Cor. 13:2.) We should not gather from this, however, that Paul is urging a striving after love by ignoring study of the Bible. No, the import of the apostle's words is that inasmuch as the purpose of knowledge is to reveal to us the loving character of God and to inspire us to strive more diligently to be like Him, our study of the Word has been unprofitable to us if this divine object is not obtained.

Jesus explained that the import of the law given to Israel could be summed up in the terms of love—supreme love for God, and a love for one's neighbor equal to that which one possesses for himself. No matter how much "knowledge" a Jew acquired concerning the technical requirements of the Law, if he did not glean from it this great lesson of love for God and for his neighbor, his knowledge was of no real value to him from the divine standpoint. While the Christian today is not directly under the law given to Israel at the hands of Moses, yet his study of the Law should help to reveal its great lesson of divine love; and in the light of that lesson every follower of the Master should endeavor to reflect in his life the principle of unselfishness, which is love.

Love is the spirit of giving as contrasted with the spirit of getting. With this spirit dominant in our lives, we can readily see how it would solve most of the difficulties we encounter. Either one or the other of these spirits must govern more or less in all the affairs of life. It may be a fortune that we desire, either to get or to give, or it may be merely

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the matter of "giving in" to others in a matter of opinion—where principle is not at stake—or, on the other hand, of insisting upon getting "our own way." If the spirit of "giving" controls in all of the wide range of our endeavor and association, automatically we will be promoters of peace and harmony and happiness among our fellows; but if the selfish spirit of "getting" is uppermost in our thoughts and lives, strife, dissension, disappointment and heartaches, will follow in the wake of all that we do and say.

We are not to think of love as being more important than faith, or hope, or joy, or the other graces of the spirit. It is well not to make comparisons as to the relative value of things which God has included as being His will for us. We should keep in mind that everything that God enjoins upon us is important—fundamentally important. Instead of saying that love is more important than this, that, or the other phase of the Christian life, it would be better to say that it comprehends them all. It is the "bond of perfectness." (Col. 3:14.)

Love, for example, comprehends faith, for without love faith would soon ebb away. It is only as we view our experiences in the light of divine love, that faith's firm foundation is able to stand the tests to which it is subjected. But without love such experiences may make shipwreck of our faith.

And what is true of Love's relationship to faith is true concerning its influence on every other phase of Christian life and endeavor. We could have no true joy in the Lord apart from this unselfish outlook with respect to every detail of our lives. Meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, all are comprehended in love. We may, for selfish reasons, temporarily exercise patience toward one who may have wronged us, but sooner or later such outward cords of restraint will snap asunder and selfishness will dictate a course of smiting and revenge. But "love never faileth." If we are motivated by love, we truly will want to do good to our enemies; even as God commended His love to us while *we* were yet sinners.

In the 6th chapter of Galatians, Paul speaks of "sowing to the spirit," contrasting it with "sowing to the flesh." He tells us that if we are faithful in "sowing to the spirit," in due time we shall reap if we faint not; and the reaping, he explains, will be "life everlasting." Summing up the thought the apostle concludes: "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10.)

The "spirit" unto which we "sow," is the spirit of God, which is the spirit of love—that divine spirit of unselfishness which should permeate every fibre of the Christian's being. And, as Paul shows, the practical outworking of such a "sowing" to the spirit is in the fact that we will be busy doing "good unto all men," and "especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Thus will we be like Jesus, who laid down His life going about "doing good." (Act 10:38).

—*Adapted from The Dawn.*

COURAGE FOR THE DAY

I shall not fear tomorrow, but will go
Straight onward o'er the path that I must tread;
I shall not doubt tomorrow, though I know
There will be obstacles in path ahead.
I shall not doubt tomorrow, but shall pray,
"God give me courage for the task today!"

—*Clipped.*

PADEREWSKI'S SPIDER

[*Ignace Jan Paderewski, Polish pianist and statesman, whose chief fame is based on poetic interpretation, is possessed of intensely refined instincts. The homely incident given here, taken from his memoirs, is symbolic of his life and character. Paderewski, though 79 years of age, still pursues the concert stage, and recently toured the United States.*]

ONE day I was practicing in my little room in Vienna. Among the pieces I was playing, and which I had to play every day as a finger exercise, was a certain study in thirds. I was just starting to work—I lit the candle and sat down at the piano. The room was very dark, you know, there were so many tall shrubs growing close to the window.

Then, suddenly in the midst of my playing, there came down from the ceiling right on to the piano desk, something like a tiny silver thread. It attracted my attention and I looked a little closer, and then I saw—a spider attached to it. He hung there motionless and appeared to be listening to my playing, and as long as I played that particular study in thirds the little spider remained there perfectly still on his line.

And now comes the interesting thing. After finishing the study in thirds I went on to another study—in sixths this time, and the moment I began it the spider turned himself quickly about and hurried up to the ceiling.

Well, it struck me at the moment as very funny, and I was interested and deeply intrigued. I said to myself, "Now, I must see whether that spider is really musical or not—whether he meant to come down to listen on purpose, or by accident."

So I suddenly stopped my study in sixths and quickly started again the one in thirds. Instantly down came the little spider! He seemed to slide down his line, and this time to the very end, and sat on the piano desk and listened. He did not seem at all frightened, only deeply interested. . . .

He had aroused my interest greatly and I wondered if he would appear the next morning. I was very curious about him—I felt sure I should see him again. Well, he did appear the moment I began my day's work with the thirds. That little thread still hung from the ceiling and down he came the moment I touched the piano, and this same thing continued all that day, and the next day and for many weeks he came—he was a faithful companion. Whenever I started the study in thirds the little spider came quickly to the piano desk and listened.

After a time I arrived so far as to be able to see his eyes—so brilliant, like tiny, shining diamonds. He would sit immovable, or hang immovable I should say, during that Chopin Etude, perfectly content and perfectly quiet. But the moment I stopped that particular study back he went quickly to the ceiling and disappeared. Sometimes, I used to think, quite angrily.

When the vacation time came I confess I felt strangely anxious about the spider. What would become of him, I wondered. "Shall I find him when I return?" I asked myself. He had become a part of my daily practice, a kind of companion, and I knew I would miss him.

When I returned in September I looked for the little line, but it no longer hung from the ceiling. I played my study in thirds, again and again I played it. But I could not find my spider friend. The room seemed empty and lonely without him.

What had happened to him? Had some careless housemaid crushed out his little life, or had he, lonely and discouraged with the closed piano and silent room, gone elsewhere? I could only hope so. But the days went on and I never saw my spider friend again.

—*Courtesy of Sunshine Magazine.*

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.—*Emerson.*

Faith arms the Christian for every conflict.—*Don O. Shelton.*

CORRESPONDENCE AND APPEALS

MISS ETHEL H. STUDLEY, *Chairman*
56 School Street, Hingham, Mass.

If you wish to become a member of this Department, please send the Chairman the following information:

Your name, age and address (give your name in full, also your husband's first name); names and ages of your children; or, if you are not married, names and ages of your brothers and sisters; name and address of your minister.

State clearly whether you wish (1) to correspond with someone; (2) to study by mail; (3) to appeal for some article on our approved list, which does not include money or clothing.

Be sure to give all the information requested.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice must be sent to the Chairman of this Department.

TO OUR CHAIRMEN

With the publication of this number of our magazine, many of you will be making plans for a new year's work. At your first meeting, would it not be well to obtain a list of articles available in your Alliance branch, and to send that list to the chairman of this department? She could then send out names of applicants as soon as they come in, and the work could be kept up to date throughout the busy fall months. Some Alliances have helped by requesting that a certain number of names for Appeals should be sent to them each month. Can more branches follow this good example?

CORRESPONDENCE

The following are waiting to be adopted:

9. Age 35. A mother of five children in Mississippi. The children range from three to twelve years.

10. Age 26. A mother of five children ranging from two months to nine years. They live in Virginia.

11. Age 26. A young married woman in Arkansas.

12. Age 48. A married woman in Arkansas.

13. Age 22. A mother of one child in Arkansas.

14. Age 40. A mother in North Carolina, whose children are twelve, fourteen, seventeen and nineteen years old.

15. Age 24. A young mother who has a boy five, a girl three, and whose third little one has probably arrived since she sent in her application.

16. Age 38. A mother of seven children in Arkansas. The children are from two to eighteen years old.

17. Age 23. A mother in North Carolina who has a little girl two years old.

18. Age 35. A mother of five children in North Carolina. The children are from five to fourteen years old. The mother likes to hear about different places, as she is isolated, and the children are interested in books, stamps and music.

19. Age 14. A young girl in Arkansas, oldest of five children.

20. Age 28. A mother of three small children in North Carolina. The children are all boys, four years, two years, and ten months old.

21. Age 40. A woman in North Carolina who has a son twenty years old, a daughter eighteen, and an orphan nephew whom she cares for. They live thirteen miles from the nearest town and the roads are bad; so they are rather isolated, and want to hear about the outside world.

22. Age 49. A woman in Arkansas whose husband is sixty years old, and who has five of her ten children still at

home. She lives in a thinly settled community seven miles from town.

23. Age 49. A North Carolina mother of nine children, four of whom are married. The youngest are six, nine, twelve and fourteen years old.

24. Age 40. An unmarried woman who lives with her brother in Tennessee.

25. Age 25. A young mother of four small children, aged two, four, six and seven years. The husband is away much of the time, at work, and in the mountainous region where they live, she cannot get out among people very often. Her home is in Arkansas.

26. Age 37. A mother of three children, eleven, fourteen and sixteen years old. They can all get out among friends, but she is ill and stays at home all the time. She lives in Tennessee.

27. Age 55. A married woman who is not able to do much work, and who would enjoy hearing about other places. She also lives in Tennessee.

28. Age 30. A mother of three children aged eight, nine and eleven years. They live in North Carolina. She writes, "I am greatly interested in their schooling and try to help them all I can. I pray for them to grow up to be useful and intelligent God-loving young ones."

29. Age 26. A mother in Arkansas who has two boys aged two and a half and seven years.

30. Age 24. A farmer's wife in North Carolina, mother of three little boys, five, three, and seven months old.

APPEALS

31. A fifteen-year-old girl in Virginia hopes someone will send her some pretty ribbon for hair bows.

32. A poor farmer's wife in North Carolina lives four miles from town. She has two boys fifteen and eight years old, and a girl of thirteen. The fifteen-year-old boy cannot walk or talk. It takes most of her time to attend to him. She would like almost anything that some good friend would send her.

33. A woman in Virginia would like some books or magazine articles on home-making. "The girl I have doesn't understand home-making, and I should like to interest her if possible."

34. An eleven-year-old girl in Virginia would like some books to read.

35. Also a twelve-year-old boy in Virginia wants some good books.

36. A sixty-year-old member of our Exchange would like some second-hand Holmes' Readers or something similar. He lives in North Carolina.

37. A twenty-two-year-old girl in North Carolina wants some good books for her sisters eight and seventeen years old, and her brothers thirteen and ten years old. On account of her mother's ill health she could not finish school herself, and she is trying to help the others get the education which she herself missed.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Please do not forget to write something interesting about yourself when you send in your application. It is hard for our members to choose when all they know is your name and address. They like to know what you are interested in, and how you spend your spare time. Also please do not ask us to sell rugs, spreads, etc., for you, as our rules oblige us to refuse.

CORRECTION

We are glad to make correction of a typographical error in the "Report of Chairman of Libraries" in the July-August issue. The first sentence of the second paragraph should have read as follows: "During the year, over 43,000 magazines and more than 7,000 books have been sent out." Full credit should be given for this very extensive magazine service.

LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

After three years as an efficient Chairman of the Library Department Mrs. Neal D. Randall has felt it necessary to give up the work, but she remains on our Central Committee. We are most fortunate to have as our new Chairman, Mrs. Samuel Johnson of Milton, Mass.

THE WORM THAT TURNED

THERE was once a worm that turned —into an explorer. His ancestral home, a field by a brook, had been ideal once. The soil had been porous and full of worm food—humus; warm and moist, though never wet. Then the farmer who owned the land moved; ditches filled, the land was flooded and many worms drowned. In winter the whole was frozen into a solid block of ice; few worms survived.

But one of the survivors was a pioneer. He left his birthplace and settled on land to the west. Since he was not anxious to make a breakfast for the early bird, he had to sink his new shaft and be well out of sight before dawn. The surface of his new home was a combination of sand, clay and fine gravel. Untouched for years, soaked by winter rains and baked by summer heat, it was nearly as hard as concrete. But the worm had to get in it or die.

So he pushed out his nose till its needle-like point found an entrance between the hard-packed grains of sand; it was not easy. Another push and another; he kept on till he had gone down half an inch. Then the ground was too hard for pushing; he had to *eat* his way down. Soil and sand went down his gullet to a crop that was lined with skin like hard leather. Grit in the crop acted like tiny grinding mills which crushed the sand to paste, the process being facilitated by digestive juices which turned particles of decayed vegetable matter into body-building material. The rest passed through his body in the form of "worm casts," excellent fertilizing material for the soil.

The explorer did not rest for one moment all night. Even so, half his five inches remained above ground when the birds began to twitter ominously—then the worm struck luck in the form of a long, straight root of red clover, relic of the days when the field had been cultivated. That root had been slowly disintegrating the mineral matter around it by the gases of its decomposition. The result was a narrow shaft, lightly packed with soft matter. The nose-needle found its way into that—to safety.

The rest was easy, but only for a worm. He was stronger, in proportion to his size, than any creature which walks, swims or flies. For ribs he had 200 rings which encircled his mighty little frame; the lower edges acted as feet. Contracting the ribs in front, he expanded those behind till they had a firm grip on the sides of the tunnel. Then he pushed; and kept on pushing, contracting and expanding his ribs, widening and smoothing the tunnel at each move forward. Drawing upon his own chemical laboratory, he enameled the sides of his tunnel as he completed it.

Though sightless, his skin was sensitive to light so he did not go up to the surface till nightfall. Then he emerged, partly for a change of diet, also to drink the dew and bathe in it. With his wonderfully sensitive nose-point, he found microscopically minute portions of withered leaves and shriveled roots which he turned into nutritious food, no matter how decomposed they were.

Just before the faintest glimpse of dawn would have warned him to hurry below, he was alarmed by a tiny shrew. So sensitive is the worm to soil vibration that the tread of those wee feet was enough to send him back to his burrow. He retired tail first, pausing only to drag a scrap of dead turf over the mouth of his hole, partly to hide it and partly to prevent evaporation.

He had work to do down there. Though there was food around him, he always kept a storehouse, hoarded scraps of dead leaves and roots. Each was carefully coated with digestive juice and packed neatly away. That first vertical shaft had been only the beginning of his mining; he needed tunnels in every direction. Each led to further supplies of food, admitted air to improve that food, and provided avenues of escape from the centipedes and slugs which would follow him.

There was not much to fear from moles until more worms should come

into the new land and make the soil porous. Then the mole, driving his tunnel with comparative ease, would eat many of them. But, on the other hand, when the mole drives his tunnel close to the surface he gathers far more foes of the worm than worms themselves.

The explorer was not alone for long. The conditions which had driven him to the higher ground bade other worms follow, and in due time the pioneer found a mate. Reproduction was slow, and there probably were not more than 100 worms to the acre that first year. They had no communal activities; each drove himself endless tunnels for food and safety. But the more each aerated the subsoil the more he benefited his neighbors.

Once the rain had been held near the surface till it evaporated, souring and packing the earth so hard that no air and little moisture reached the depths. Now tunnels admitted both, their reaction freeing potash, lime, nitrogen, phosphates and other plant food.

What had been barren land was now rich with herbage, providing in turn more food for more worms—more little grinding mills to crush inorganic matter into fertilizing materials. So arose beauty and wealth from desolation.

The worm knows nothing of the incalculable benefits he confers on mankind—that unless he worked, man would soon starve. He is no boaster; he can only work miracles.

The amount of soil brought to the surface by earthworms is enormous—in some places as much as 18 tons per acre in a year. Charles Darwin tells of fields that were at one time closely carpeted with small stones and boulders, which after a few years disappeared from view. Digging in the soft soil which had replaced them, the stones were again encountered at a depth of some inches. The worms had deposited their little mounds of earth at the surface; these in time were leveled out and themselves surmounted by other mounds. As the years went by, the earth crept up and up, over the tops of the pebbles. Archaeology owes a debt to the earthworms, for thus were buried many objects that otherwise would soon have been destroyed.

It is in their mode of reproduction, however, that earthworms are most incredible. When breeding time comes, they seek another worm. Any worm will do, for each worm is both male and female—that is, each individual carries in its body the sperm of a male and the ova of a female. On meeting, each one secretes quantities of viscous mucus which in a short time dries and forms a thick band about the body. There is an exchange of male sperm, then the worms separate, each still wearing its thick band of dried mucus, which now begins to slip forward over the body. As it goes, it collects quantities of albumin from special glands on the under side of the body—nourishing material for the worms-to-come. When the band has worked up to the 14th segment of the body, it there collects eggs which are carried along, too. Farther and farther moves the band until it passes over the little receptacles where the sperm was stored, which now passes out to fertilize the eggs. The band is nearly off, now, and as one end slips free of the head of the worm it contracts as if drawn tight by an invisible drawstring. In a moment the other end slips off and is drawn tight also, forming a tightly sealed cocoon. In this the eggs develop.

—Condensed from John O'London's Weekly and Baltimore Sun.

A SONG OF THE ROAD

I lift my cap to Beauty,
I lift my cap to Love;
I bow before my Duty;
And know that God's above!
My heart through shining arches
Of leaf and blossom goes;
My soul, triumphant, marches
Through life to life's repose.
And I, through all this glory,
Nor know, nor fear my fate—
The great things are so simple,
The simple are so great!

—Fred G. Bowles.

IN GREATER MEASURE

In the range of human achievement, those who win the laurels are those who have given of themselves in the greater measure.

A STRANGER drove into a gas station to get the tires inflated. Two attendants promptly came to his service. One attended to the airpump, the other carefully cleaned the windshield and dusted off the hood. In just a few minutes the work was done—a thank-you job. The man offered a tip, but this was politely refused.

"Glad to have been of service to you, sir; drive in again when we can be of help," was the courteous answer with a wave of the hand as the stranger drove away.

And the stranger did drive in again—many times—and found genuine pleasure in paying for his purchases at this gas station.

* * *

There was once a "peddler" with a variety of goods. His name was Jason. He made regular calls at many homes, and was without exception received gladly. But this is how Jason did it:

One day while showing his wares in a home, he stepped over to the water tank for a drink. The faucet was dripping. "It needs fixing," said the housewife; "my husband has been wanting to get a plumber out to fix it." The peddler took his leave, but in a few days reappeared and inquired if the faucet was still dripping. It was.

"I've a new kind of washer that I'm selling. It fits snugger and lasts longer than the ordinary washer. You won't need a plumber to fix your faucet—let me show you." And with that Jason stepped inside. "There's nothing to it," he remarked to the housewife; "anyone can do it." With the help of a small wrench, Jason had the faucet repaired in a few minutes. The housewife bought a card of washers, assorted sizes, and offered to pay Jason for his trouble. He laughingly declined. He took pay for the washers, but not for the service. And the housewife bought something more from his case—something she did not immediately need.

* * *

On the Pacific Coast lives a Chinaman who hawks his vegetables from early spring until late autumn. One would think he possessed a large truck farm from the quantity of vegetables he sells.

One day one of his customers discovered that Sam had just a quarter acre of ground. But how he worked that ground! He watered it, fertilized it, and planted it in a succession of crops that kept the soil constantly producing. Sam put into that quarter acre the greater measure of industry and thought and planning.

* * *

"How marvelously that pianist plays." Yes, but he spends six hours a day at the keys.

"How angelic is the voice of that singer!" Yes, but she works on scales every day of her life, and foregoes anything that might prove harmful to her health in order that her voice may retain its angelic sweetness.

"What a splendid book that author has written!" Yes, but he toiled upon it day and night for years—studying, writing, revising.

"What a remarkable success that man has made of his business!" Yes, but what lean years he passed through, and how he planned and prayed and labored to make that business fruitful!

And so runs the gauntlet of human endeavor. Those who win the rewards are those who have given of themselves in the greater measure.

—Adapted for Sunshine Magazine from Fred A. Barrow in Good Business.

No loveliness is ever lost,
No dream is ever dreamed in vain;
Whatever comes of grief or pain,
However life's long trails are crossed—
The ancient ecstacies return,
The old winds walk again,
The old stars burn.

—Nancy Byrd Turner.

JAPANESE SUNSET

There are no such sunsets in Japan as in the tropics: the light is gentle as a light of dreams; there are no furies of color; there are no chromatic violences in nature in this Orient. All in sea or sky is tint rather than color, and tint vaportoned. I think that the exquisite taste of the race in the matter of colors and of tints, as exemplified in the dyes of their wonderful textures, is largely attributable to the sober and delicate beauty of nature's tones in this all-temperate world where nothing is garish.

Before me the fair vast lake sleeps, softly luminous, far-ringed with chains of blue volcanic hills shaped like a sierra. On my right, at its eastern end, the most ancient quarter of the city spreads its roofs of blue-gray tile; the houses crowd thickly down to the shore, to dip their wooden feet into the flood. With a glass I can see my own windows and the far-spreading of the roofs beyond, and above all else the green citadel with its grim castle, grotesquely peaked. The sun begins to set, and exquisite astonishments of tinting appear in water and sky. . . .

Rich purples cloud broadly behind and above the indigo blackness of the serrated hills; mist purples, fading upward smokily into faint vermilions and dim gold, which again melt up through ghostliest greens into the blue. The deeper waters of the lake, far away, take a tender violet indescribable, and the silhouette of the pine-shadowed island seems to float in that sea of soft sweet color. But the shallower and nearer is cut from the deeper water by the current as sharply as by a line drawn, and all the surface on this side of that line is a shimmering bronze—old rich ruddy gold-bronze.

All the fainter colors change every five minutes—wondrously change and shift like tones and shades of fine shot-silks.

—LAFCADIO HEARN in
Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan.

It is no use running; to set out betimes is the main point.—*Fontaine.*

A SMILE OR TWO

A small boy was asked to dine at the home of a distinguished professor. His mother questioned him on his return, "You are sure you didn't do anything that was not perfectly polite?"

"Why, no, nothing to speak of."

"Then something did happen."

"Well, while I was trying to cut the meat it slipped off to the floor. But I made it all right," said the boy.

"What did you do?"

"Oh, I just said carelessly, 'that's always the way with tough meat.' "—*U. S. Coast Guard.*

The club bore was relating one of his long-winded stories that everybody knew by heart. He was describing what happened to him when he went on a trip to Grand Canyon in America during a world tour.

"The soft curtain of night was just falling," he orated. "There I stood, drinking in the scene, with the giant abyss yawning before me."

One of the listeners interrupted at this point. "I say, old chap," he asked, "was that abyss yawning before you got there?"—*Speaking Tape.*

A Mexican gazed through the bars at County Jailer H. E. Cox.

"Can you read and write?" demanded Cox during the booking process.

"Can write, not read," replied the prisoner.

"Write your name, then," said Cox. The Mexican scrawled huge letters across the page.

"What is that you wrote?" inquired the puzzled jailer.

"I don't know," said the Mexican, "I told you I can't read."—*Imperial Valley Press.* (*El Centro, Calif.*)

Old Colored Mammy: "I wants a ticket for Magnolia."

Ticket Agent (after ten minutes of weary thumbing over railroad guides): "Where is Magnolia?"

Old Colored Mammy: "She's settin' over dar on de bench."—*Exchange.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

WHERE CATS WERE KINGS

There was once a kitten named Thomas who lived with his mother and his little brothers and sisters on a farm. But one day the farmer gave his sister Susy to the grocery man, and another day he gave Brownie to a neighbor over the hill, and the next week he gave Buttons, the handsomest kitten in the litter, to a little girl who lived in the nearby town.

The old cat wept but she accepted the departure of her kittens as what always happened.

"I have so many kittens, Thomas, every year," she said. "If Farmer Brown kept them all it would soon be a cat farm."

"I know, mother," said Little Tom, "but it doesn't seem fair to me. I am going to sail away until I find a land where cats rule and give people away instead."

"You will never find that, I fear, my son," said the wise old cat, but she made him a little sailor suit, and packed his clothes in a dunnage bag which he could carry over his shoulder, and blessed him and bade him farewell.

Merrily the kitten strolled down the road that led to the sea. And he looked handsome and merry when he came to the wharves where the ships lay. He soon found a captain on one of the decks.

"Captain," he said, pulling his forelock, "Do you need a good smart ship's cat for your next voyage?"

"Well," said the Captain doubtfully, "I do need a cat. But you look young. You're sure you're, well, ship-broken?"

"Certainly, sir!" said Tom with spirit.

The Captain patted him on the shoulder.

"Not bad for a young cat, not bad at all," he said. "Well, come sign the papers."

So Tom Sailor, as he called himself now, became the ship's cat of the Arabella, and a very good one he was, too. And the Arabella sailed and sailed, and visited the land where men eat hay and oats, and the land where men open their mouths and eat the wind, and many other strange lands, yet never came to the land of cats.

When the ship had sailed for a year and a day, Tom Sailor was growing discouraged and was glad to hear that the Arabella was sailing homeward. On the voyage home he happened to be in a port near the ship Arethusa, and he heard a voice calling "Hello! Why, bless my stars! If that isn't my cousin Tom!" and sure enough there was Tom's cousin Bill, who was ship's cat on the Arethusa.

Of course, Tom Sailor slipped over to have a talk with Bill and they laughed over old days when they had sailed on a shingle on the mill-pond and dipped their whiskers in the farmer's milkpail, and while they were laughing and chatting the Arabella sailed away, never noticing that Tom Sailor was not aboard.

When Tom Sailor realized this he was very much upset, but Cousin Bill took him to the Captain of the Arethusa who agreed to let him work his passage home.

The two cats had very happy times together, and would have been very content if it had not been for little Jim the Cabin Boy who never lost an opportunity of teasing them.

Things were going on in this way when one day a storm came up, and the Arethusa was wrecked on the reefs near a group of islands. All the crew swam safely ashore, the Captain gallantly swimming last with the ship's papers tied in a bundle to the top of his head. They stood shivering on the beach, but they had not been there long when the bushes parted and thousands of cats ran out. Overpowered by their number, the Captain and the crew allowed themselves to have their hands bound behind their backs, and to be hustled off to the presence of the chief of the cats.

Tom Sailor and Cousin Bill, however, were greeted with every sign of delight

and pity, as captives just released from captivity. They went with the others to the throne of the Chief of the Cats, a majestic figure in a feather head-dress, who heard the story of the shipwreck, and then turning to Tom Sailor demanded:

"And how have these humans treated you?"

"Very well indeed," said Tom Sailor, "except," then he looked at little Jim the Cabin Boy, but the child returned his look so pleadingly that brave Tom Sailor changed his mind—"there are no exceptions," he added generously.

"In that case I will not have you punished," said the cat chief, turning to the Captain and the crew. "I will merely have you collared and belled as you do with my people in your country." At his command the other cats brought out collars with bells on them and the collars were marked "Tiger" and "Snowy" and "Fluff" and such names, and the Captain's collar was marked "Pet."

When the collars had been put on by the multitude of cats, the chief once more addressed the men.

"In your land, cats have to make themselves useful, if their owners are to feed them. Now you are to make yourselves useful to us. You are to catch dogs; you will find plenty on the other islands. Only so shall we give you berries, vegetables and milk."

So the Captain and the crew swam daily across the cold channels and caught dogs, while Tom Sailor and Cousin Bill lay in the sun by day and danced by the light of the moon on the coral sands. They were very happy, but they grieved a little for their old companions of the Arethusa.

"It isn't as though they'd been brought up to it," said Cousin Bill.

But one morning as they lay asleep in the sun they heard a whisper near them.

"It's me, Jim the Cabin Boy, come to thank you and say good-by. A dachshund on the next island made an arrangement with the Captain to show him where an old tool chest was, and we've made a ship, we have, and we're to sail at noon, we are, when all the cats are asleep. But I couldn't go without saying good-by," and Jim the Cabin Boy wept a few grateful tears.

"A fair voyage to you," said Tom Sailor and Cousin Bill. "When you arrive at the home-port tell our mothers that we have reached the land at last where cats are Kings. Good luck." And with that they rolled over contentedly, to warm their other sides, and were soon once more fast asleep in the sun.

—HENRY BESTON in
Christian Science Monitor.

THE GRAIN OF SAND

"I wonder where all this sand came from!" Jackie looked up and down the beach. There were so many little grains of sand, all so fine and of so many colors.

"I used to be rock up on top of a mountain!" Jackie thought it was one of the grains of sand on top of his sand castle speaking. "The rain and the wind and the frost made cracks in me and wore me away. By and by a big piece tumbled off and rolled down the mountain. The mountain stream washed over me and tumbled other rocks against me. I was broken up into smaller and smaller pieces. After a few hundred thousand years I was a pebble—or rather a lot of pebbles—instead of a great boulder.

"Still the stream kept tumbling me along toward the river. The water kept grinding me against other little pebbles and rolling me along toward the sea. At last I was washed up here by the waves, but I'm not a mountain nor a boulder nor ever a pebble any more! I'm just a grain of sand!"

"And won't you ever be a mountain again?" Jackie asked the Sand Grain.

"Perhaps I shall!" the Sand Grain told him. "After a few more thousands of years I'll be buried deep under other sands. They will press me closer and closer to the grains round me, and the water will melt some of the things in the rocks and cement us all together into

sandstone. Then perhaps the wrinkling of the earth's surface will raise us up and up, very slowly, until we are out of the water and up on the mountain tops again!"

Jackie rubbed his eyes. Was that really the story of the grain of sand?

—ELEANOR HAMMOND in *Storyland.*

(Courtesy of Sunshine Magazine.

Seaman (in restaurant): "I can't eat this soup."

Waiter: "Sorry, I'll call the head waiter."

Seaman: "This soup, I can't eat it."

Head Waiter: "I'll take care of it at once. Call the cook."

Seaman: "Cook, I can't eat this soup."

Cook: "What's the matter with it?"

Seaman: "Nothing, only I ain't got a spoon."—*Annapolis Log.*

MY TWIN AND I

What fun it is to be a twin!
If Daddy takes you for a walk,
The other one of you can stay
With Mother, who will read and talk.

You always dress just like your twin,
And then you laugh when grown-ups say—
"Dear me, you FUNNY little twins,
We can't tell you apart today."

And when the folks go out at night,
They need not wonder what to do,
There is the other little girl,
Whom they can leave at home with you.

You have your playmate always near,
There are two of you to laugh and sing,
And two will love the friends who come
And they just twice the love will bring.

—EMILIE BLACKMORE STAPP.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

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To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

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